



MINUTES
OCONEE COUNTY COUNCIL MEETING
Workshop with the Planning Commission
March 29, 2018

MEMBERS, OCONEE COUNTY COUNCIL

Mr. Paul Cain, District III
Mr. Wayne McCall, District II
Ms. Edda Cammick, Chairwoman, District I
Mr. Julian Davis III, Vice Chair, District IV
Mr. Glenn Hart, Chair Pro Tem, District V

Oconee County Council and Oconee County Planning Commission held a workshop at 6:00 PM in Council Chambers, 415 South Pine Street, Walhalla, SC with all Council Members, County Administrator Scott Moulder, County Attorney David Root, and Katie D. Smith, Clerk to Council present.

Planning Commission Members Present: Frankie Pearson, Chairman; Brad Kisker, Vice-Chairman; Andrew Gramling; Alex Vassey; Mike Johnson; Gwen McPhail; & Stacy Lyles. Planning Commission staff liaison Adam Chapman, Planner was also present.

Press: Pursuant to the Freedom of Information Act, notice of the meeting, date, time, place of meeting and agenda were posted on the bulletin board at the County Administrative Offices, 415 South Pine Street, Walhalla, SC, and the County Council website [www.oconeesc.com/council]. In addition it was made available [*upon request*] to the newspapers, radio stations, television stations and concerned citizens.

Members of the press present: Norm Cannada / Daily Journal & Dick Mangrum / WGOG.

Call to Order

Ms. Cammick called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

Ms. Cammick opened the discussion noting this was a joint meeting with the Oconee County Planning Commission & the Oconee County Council.

Ms. Cammick turned the meeting over to Mr. Frankie Pearson, Chairman of the Oconee County Planning Commission.

Mr. Pearson noted they have been completing work on the corridor plan. Additionally, he noted Mr. John Catoe from Alta Planning would be giving a brief presentation regarding the corridor plan and the comprehensive plan.

Lengthy discussion followed regarding the topics indicated below, with various opinions expressed to include but not limited to:

Discussion regarding Corridor Planning

Mr. John Catoe, Project Engineer with Alta Planning, addressed Council & Planning Commission utilizing a PowerPoint presentation [copy filed with these minutes] highlighting the following:

- Corridor study
- Hwy 123 with an emphasis on traffic and safety
- PowerPoint presentation was used as an example of what Oconee County could expect

Mr. McCall came in during this presentation.

Mr. Cain thanked Mr. Catoe for the presentation and asked how things got to this point. Mr. Catoe noted every case is different but traditionally there is a lot of auto centric development that has happened over the last 30 to 50 years.

Ms. Cammick noted the primary interest is the 123 corridor from 93 into Seneca.

Mr. Johnson noted one of the reasons this was brought to Council was two years ago the Planning Commission was set on a directive of looking at gateways and corridors within the County and were identifying lots of different corridors and the reason why those were important from a planning standpoint of how that is going to look in the future. Additionally, he noted they have been redirected by Council to look at 123. While this committee has control of talking about what a small rural road looks like and how we might control it for the future, things like Hwy 123 are beyond their scope.

Discussion continued to include:

- Ingress and egress
- Acceleration and deceleration
- Traffic flow
- Planning phase seems to be easy but the ability to pay is where the struggle seems to be

Mr. Catoe noted there is always a difficult balance of people wanting to get to where they want to go and then having to slow down and stop. People get upset about causing more traffic and slowing things down and then if things go too far then people are moving too fast and creating unsafe conditions. Further, he noted they look at the corridors and study what they can do. Discussion continued.

Discussion regarding Comprehensive Plan

Mr. John Catoe, Project Engineer with Alta Planning, addressed Council & Planning Commission utilizing a PowerPoint presentation [copy filed with these minutes] highlighting the following:

- Defines a community's goals, objectives and policies
- Examines a community's strengths and weaknesses
- Required by SC Comprehensive Planning Enabling Act of 1994; must review every 5 years and update every 10 years
- Provides understanding of the community's common goals
- Creates an image of what our community is and what we want it to be
- Prioritizes community needs and promotes efficient use of limited resources
- Nine sections that make up a Comprehensive Plan include Population, Economic Development, Natural Resources, Cultural Resources, Community Facilities, Housing, Land Use, Transportation, & Priority Investment

Mr. Johnson asked how they would be able to get community involvement and input. Mr. Catoe noted they work with the Planning Department of the municipality and organize a series of workshops that are an agreeable time of the day and also are advertised for community input. Mr. Catoe estimates the total time to complete a Comprehensive Plan is eight to ten months. Discussion continued.

Mr. Kisker noted there were two tasks the Planning Commission has been given, which are corridors and the comprehensive plan review. First, he noted the 123 corridor is above their pay grade and they need outside help. Further, he noted it's not so much Seneca going towards Clemson but rather Clemson coming towards Seneca. Additionally, he questioned how do you improve traffic on 123 when growth is being pushed towards us. This is ultimately where Planning Commission needs help and the funds for a professional organization to complete the study. Secondly, Mr. Kisker noted that Mr. Adam Chapman, Planner with Oconee County, has compiled a document entitled "Staff Outline of Estimated Costs for the 2020 Comprehensive Plan" [copy filed with these minutes] with in-house estimates. Discussion continued.

Mr. Hart asked if the previous comprehensive plan was complete in-house or did an outside firm complete it.

Mr. Moulder noted the previous full rewrite was done in-house with staff. At that time, there were three planners and now we have one planner. Further, he noted there were planners that came and assisted with the public meetings. The 2015 review was completed in-house because it is just statistical updates.

Lengthy discussion continued to include but not limited to:

- Full rewrite
- In-house will still cost money
- Implement and fund the comp plan, not just plan for it
- Community Facilities, Transportation, Education, etc.; these are things that are being implemented now that was predicted 10 years ago
- Alta has been preselected as the on call group
- One full time planner with the County
- Comprehensive Plan is estimated to cost \$89,000
- Corridor Study is estimated to cost \$25,000
- Accurate representation of what the County needs

Mr. Hart asked if anyone has contacted the Highway Department and asked this to be put on their corridor study and present to us at no cost? Mr. Pearson noted they have received information from SCDOT about traffic studies but was unaware they had a corridor committee. Discussion continued.

Ms. Cammick noted the Appalachian Council of Government [ACOG] has been looking at the corridor near Food Lion in Seneca for improvement and has a five year plan in place to handle this intersection. ACOG picks several projects in Oconee, Anderson, and Spartanburg and the Food Lion intersection is one of these projects.

Lengthy discussion continued to include but not limited to:

- Sewer lines
- Education system
- Tourism
- Quality of life

- Industry follows
- Planning Commission has control over the direction of the plan
- Planning Commission will go out to each district and have citizen input
- Direction from Council in regards to completing in-house or hiring outside firm

Mr. Moulder noted he would put the requests in the budget documents and Council can vote at that time.

Discussion regarding Traditional Neighborhood Development [TND]

Mr. Cain opened the discussion noting people are moving into the area and they would like to see a development similar to Patrick Square in Clemson. While talking with a developer, Mr. Cain asked why they have not start building similar developments and he said they cannot because the code will not allow this. The developer noted you would have to create a new type of development district to build what the market wants. This task was given to the Planning Commission to discuss and give recommendations to Council what this district would consist of and then Planning Commission has asked for more direction. Additionally, Mr. Cain and staff have met with the developer. The developer is ready, willing, and able to assist and give ideas.

Lengthy discussion followed to include:

- New zoning district to put in the matrix?
- Zoning district that has substandard roads and they could never be incorporated into the County road system
- Roads are the not the issue because they are the same width
- Established the code to restrict how close a house can be built

Mr. Chapman addressed Council and Planning Commission noting the following:

- Original question was commercial or non-commercial
- Current plan development district is residential with a small commercial element
- Developer wants to have a residential only in this Traditional Neighborhood Development
- Smaller right-of-ways, streetscapes, green space, etc.
- Community input

Additional discussion continued.

Mr. Pearson turned the meeting back over to Ms. Cammick.

Adjourn

Ms. Cammick made a motion, approved unanimously 5 – 0, to adjourn at 7:23 p.m. .

Respectfully Submitted:

Katie D. Smith
Clerk to Council